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ABSTRACT

The booklet is a guide to the use of television for teachers of modern languages; it deals with prerecorded programs and with classroom productions. A general methodology which will allow the teacher to use either simplified programs for anglophones or unsimplified programs for native speakers is set out. The suggested method may be adapted to fit particular classes and course objectives, but the teacher must have the desired program on video-tape and operate the videorecorder personally. An outline of basic methodology includes previewing, viewing, and followup activities. Directions are given for accomplishing individualization by setting up a viewing center. Guidelines are offered for classroom TV production; the dialogues and short plays used intensively in the new structural and audiolingual courses can serve as a basis for student productions which provide motivation for learning and an opportunity to use the skills of listening and speaking which the students have been rehearsing. Some kinds of productions that have proven successful in French classes are outlined, and a four-page plan for a short production of about 15 minutes which involves most of the class is presented, illustrating the various techniques suggested in the booklet. (Author/AJ)

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Téléméthode

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Téléméthode

A guide to the use of television for teachers of modern languages. This booklet deals with the pre-recorded programs and classroom productions.

Television and Language Objectives

Television can play an important role in reaching the linguistic and cultural objectives of a language course. (1) The television picture helps clarify the accompanying dialogue. It offers the sort of association between eye and ear that assures direct comprehension with less reliance on verbal definitions and translation. The picture is also an additional stimulus to conversation during the teacher-student dialogue that follows the viewing of a program. Finally, the television screen offers an ideal vehicle for conveying a feeling for the culture of another people. Works of art, monuments, industry, sports must be seen. It is even more important that language students see as well as hear the subtle nuances when the people of the target language express humour, anger, joy, affection, approval, etc. Gestures and facial expressions are as important as the accompanying words.

What Programs Are Available?

A scene from the OECA series Les Aventures de Dorpp.

In many areas of Ontario, English-speaking students can now view French-language programs on their television sets. These programs are of two sorts: those produced for native speakers and those produced for students learning French. Among the former, the language teacher will find use for comedies, mystery shows, newscasts, sportscasts, documentaries, etc. These can be used in their entirety or in part. On the other hand, those programs specifically designed for English-speaking students of French have either been produced or acquired by The Ontario Educational Communications Authority.

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(1) "The aims of the total French program are as outlined in the Grade 7 program: attitudinal development, linguistic objectives cultural objectives." Curriculum S.15A (11-12), Ontario Ministry of Education.

Example of these are: Les Aventures de Dorpp, Langue et activité, En Français, and Suivez la piste. (2)

How Can Television Be Used?

Why have the abundant resources mentioned above not been used more widely? First, the television braodcast rarely comes at the right time for use in class. Secondly, few modern language teachers have developed a technique successfully using televised material, especially unsimplified material produced for native speakers.

For some of the OECA series mentioned above, there are Program Guides available which outline content and teaching suggestions. On the following pages, a general methodology which will allow the teacher to use either simplified programs for anglophones or unsimplified programs for native speakers is set out. This suggested method is not sacred and should be adapted to fit the particular program, the particular class and the particular objectives of the course being used.

It is essential that the teacher have the desired program on video-tape; it is highly desirable that he operate the videorecorder personally. Several makes of miniaturized portable videorecorders using half-inch tape are available in Canada. They are extremely easy to operate and are quite dependable. Most important, they are not expensive - less than $700. When the teacher operates the videorecorder personally, he can begin, stop or replay a program or portion of it at will. In short, he controls the video-recorder just as he controls his record player or tape-recorder. This is essential for effective use of the videorecorder.

Basic Methodology

A) Pre-viewing Activities

1. Be sure the equipment is working properly. Check it out personally.. well in advance!

2. Preview the program to be used. Select the details that need pre-teaching: vocabulary, structures, names of characters, basic plot. The amount of pre-teaching will vary according to the difficulty of the program, the ability of the class and the role of the program in reaching the particular objectives of your French course.

3. Pre-teaching. If the plot is complicated, list the characters. Tell briefly -- in French -- what happens...but do not reveal the outcome of the action. Provide a few key words and phrases that the students may not know or recognize. The overhead projector is ideal for this purpose. On the overhead projector, the teacher can reveal the names and words as he sees fit. The students hear and see the new words. This summary can be used as a review later. Classroom time is saved; no writing on the board is required.

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(2) Video-tapes of OECA programming are available through the OECA VIPS service. For further info., including prices, write to: OECA VIPS/ Media Resource Centre, Canada Square, 2180 Yonge St., Tor. Ont. M4S2C1.

B) Viewing

Pre-teaching should be restricted to about ten minutes. Then the students should actually view the program or a portion of it. A ten to fifteen minute segment is ideal. This length allows time for pre-teaching, viewing and follow-up, all within a forty minute period.

C) Follow-up Activities

Follow-up activities may be done immediately in the same period or in a subsequent period. First, you may initiate, in French, a discussion relating to the content, cultural revelation, production or appeal of the program.

The kind of questions will depend on the ability of the particular class and the relationship of the program to the course objectives.

Secondly, you may re-enter with your students certain portions of the program in order to develop further listening and speaking skills. This is best done with an audio tape-recorder, on which the sound track has been dubbed. The video-recorder is used when you want picture and sound; the audio tape-recorder when you want to re-enter the sound portion without the distraction of the picture. This technique is particularly useful for jokes and rapid dialogue that the students may not have understood.

This use of the sound track is particularly effective in "softening up" more difficult programs produced for native speakers. You can play and replay key portions of the dialogue until your students comprehend. Yet at no time is the natural conversational speed slowed up. This is important!

A further step in "softening up" such programs is the use of a text. You, or a French-speaking student if there is one in your school, can make a script from the audiotape, if none is provided with the program. The students can read the script as they listen. Then the script is withdrawn and they merely listen.

Thirdly, there is re-viewing or viewing a second time. When students can comprehend key portions of the sound track, they should see the video-taped program again. Now, they are able to appreciate it more fully. If this reviewing occurs at the beginning of a period, you may wish to conduct a brief oral review first to refresh plot and vocabulary in the students' memory just before the re-viewing.

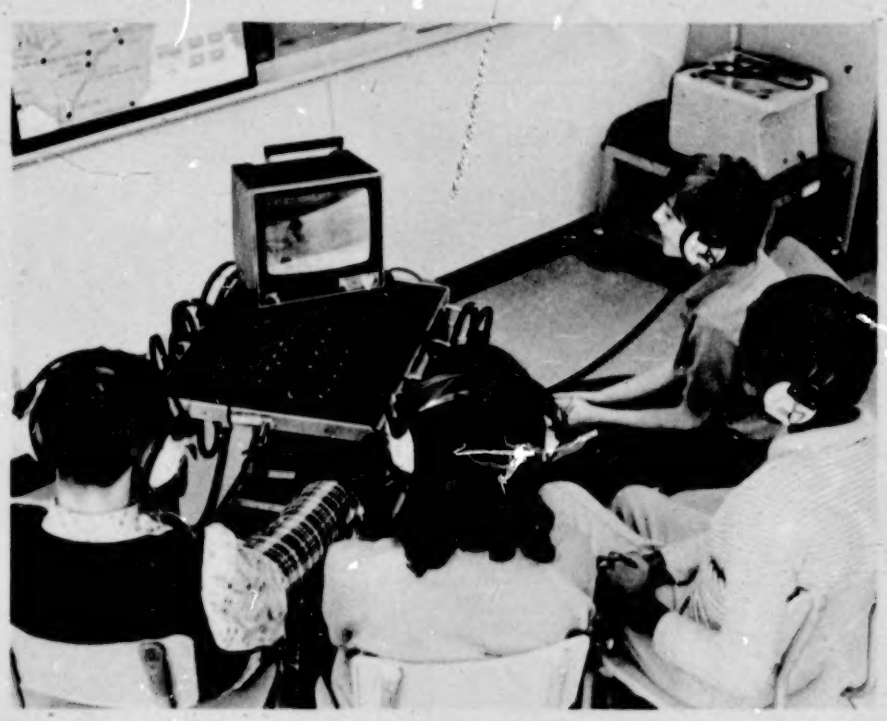
Two other follow-up activities are possible. If the television program is a dramatic presentation, it could be the starting point or stimulus for student skits, mini-plays or dramatic dialogues. The sound track and script could also be made available for individual use. This is particularly appropriate when the television program is an integral part of the course and its purpose is to develop listening comprehension. If the students are advised that the evaluation of listening comprehension will be based partially on

rehearsed material and partially on unrehearsed material, they could reasonably be expected to practise further with the sound track on an individual basis. Then during the oral/aural testing, the sound track(s) would form part of the testing material.

The ultimate objective would be to have adequate facilities within the school for individual students to use the video-tape after its use in class. Until this is possible, most schools can at least allow individual students to use the audiotape of the sound track.

In short, the television program must become an integral part of the course and not just a frill. To do this, the teacher must make time for television by cutting back on other less important or less fruitful aspects of his course.

Television and Individualization



At a viewing centre, students see the television program in the usual fashion, but the sound comes through earphones rather than via the television speaker.

In order to provide more listening practice, or to compensate for individual differences the language teacher can set up a "viewing centre", a modest form of individualization. A viewing centre is a videorecorder attached to a small television set. The students see the program in the usual fashion, but the sound comes through earphones rather than via the television speaker.

The sound is taken from the audio out on the videorecorder (or on the television set) to a jackbox into which each student in the small group of 1 to 8 plugs his earphone. In this way the sound does not distract other students who may be operating in a traditional class situation in the same room.

What programs are suitable for this use? Students using the viewing centre can see programs already used in class or any other program that is sufficiently easy that it causes no serious problems of comprehension.

These programs create a type of immersion situation. During the viewing, French becomes the langugage of communication in a world created by television.

The following series of programs produced or shown by OECA offer considerable variety in subject matter and level of difficulty: Les Aventures de Dorpp, Claudette et Toto, Zérozérohuit, Langue et activité and En Français. Many of them would be suitable for use with a viewing centre.

If you wish, you may prepare assignment sheets for the students to complete after viewing the program. It is usually true that students look and listen more attentively if they are looking and listening for something. The students read the assignment sheets prior to viewing and complete them subsequent to viewing.

Classroom TV Production (3)

So far we have considered only professionally produced programs. Amateur productions by students and teachers can also play an important role in the teaching and learning of a language. The new structural and audio-lingual courses make intensive use of dialogues and short plays. With slight modification many of them can serve as the basis for student productions. Student-developed programs can have a disadvantage: the quality of the French may be low unless the teacher demands high standards. But the advantages make the effort worthwhile: the production provides an opportunity to use the skills of listening and speaking that the students have been rehearsing for so long. More than an opportunity, it becomes a reason for suffering such

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(3) A portapak handbook for teachers called The Third Eye is available for $1.00 from OECA Publications. This book outlines "contracts", or assignments that students can carry out with the portapak.

Student production can provide motivation.

tedious rehearsing. In short, student production can provide motivation.

Outlined below are some kinds of production that have proved successful in French classes:

1. The dialogue, saynète, anecdote or mini-play common to most new language courses, can usually be adapted with little difficulty for video-taping. This can develop into a three to five minute program. The students are responsible for assembling the necessary costumes, settings and sound effects. The classroom is usually quite satisfactory for video-taping. The normal lighting is adequate in most cases. But, sound pick-up can be tricky. Air-conditioning, for example, must be turned off. Microphones are particularly sensitive to background noises that our ears easily tune out in our day to day life.

Students are enthusiastic about such productions. They make a greater effort than usual to perfect the dialogue. Participation will also be high, if the whole class is involved in various segments or versions of the dialogue or play. The finished product can be played back instantly for the sake of the actors, then used later for other classes or on Parents' Night or at an Open House. The publicity and good will generated by a well-produced show could well enhance the French program in any school.

2. Another form of production that is just as effective as live acting is the puppet show. A puppet stage is not necessary because

the television screen is a frame in itself. The camera operator can arrange to shoot only the puppets and background and scenery he wishes included. The result is a puppet performance somewhat like those of Sesame Street. Students show great imagination in creating the puppets and scenery.

There are many advantages to a puppet production. Because the play need not be memorized, the students can read their lines. Students who need only read often do a better job of recording the dialogue. The puppet, too, provides a certain anonymity. Some students who would be shy in a live production are quite willing to perform if they are not personally on camera.

Practice, however, will be necessary to synchronize the movement of the puppet with the dialogue. In addition, it is easier to get good sound pick-up when the speakers are not moving around. The microphone can easily be positioned for optimum reception since there is not the problem of its appearance on camera.

3. In both mini-play and puppet productions, student voices are used. An alternative or variation is the use of the audio-tapes that accompany most new language programs. For example, the students could mime the action in the mini-play while the professional audio recording is being fed simultaneously into the videorecorder. With a little practice even young students learn to synchronize their actions and lip movements with the recorded voices. This type of production provides the teacher with an excellent tailor-made audio-visual aid that cannot be purchased anywhere at present. It can be used in other classes during the presentation or review of the same material.

4. Another kind of production that is simple but effective is the shooting of large photos or line drawings being described by a student. This works particularly well in the "show and tell" situations during the first and second year of French. The students prepare a picture story of their own to fit the vocabulary and structures they know. As they tell their story the camera follows the action on the drawings. The sensitive use of close-up, wide-angle, fade-in, fade-out and out of focus turn a simple drawing into a flowing story.

An imaginative variation on this production is to let the French students decide what they would like to talk about, or what they can talk about. Then have them decide where in the school or community they could shoot suitable pictures. Very little shooting time is required. They shoot only enough for a two or three minute presentation. After the shooting, they dub in their French commentary and play back their presentation for the other students.

5. The production can also take the form of a "visual interpretation". Students can create a visual interpretation for a poem or song they are studying. They can use puppets, live acting, drawings, a collage of pictures clipped from newspapers and magazines or imaginative scenes shot live in the school, home or shopping plaza. The students can superimpose their own sound track or dub in the sound from a professional recording. They can use their production to introduce or review the poem or song.

6. The television screen can provide the necessary visual stimulus to clarify a structural exercise. For example, the vocabulary items in a substitution exercise are shot and the audio sound track is dubbed onto the video tape. Now the videorecorder, not the audiorecorder, is used to present or rehearse the structural exercise.

In the past teachers have either carried with them a collection of "realia" or a collection of appropriate pictures. Both collections are bulky. Besides, the television visual can be more versatile and more imaginative. For example, it might be difficult to find a picture of binoculars, and you might not wish to take your own pair to school frequently for fear of losing them. But with the television camera you could shoot pictures of several kinds of binoculars in such a way as to clarify meaning and arouse interest.

A Sample Production Plan

Student actors illustrate the meaning of key words from the dialogue.

The following is a plan for a short production of about fifteen minutes. It will involve most of the class and illustrate the various techniques suggested above. Choose a dialogue or mini play from the course you are using. To begin with, a passage of about ten lines would be ideal. The purposes of the production will be (1) to motivate through involvement, (2) to develop the skills of listening and speaking (3) to create a teaching aid for future presentation and review.

Aspects of the Production	Number of Pupils Involved	Playback Time of Finished Production
1. Title and credits:		
Discuss the total production with the class. Ask for two or three students who would like to prepare the title and credits which introduce the production. They could print on bristol board with felt markers, use letraset, lettered building blocks, cut letters out of construction paper, or even use a felt board. The finished product will be set up on a table or fastened to a wall. These students should also select a record to be played while the title and credits are being shot.	2 or 3	30 sec.
2. Pre-teaching or key words and structures:		
Select about six or eight key words from the dialogue and assign student actors to illustrate their meaning. For example, if "gros sac" were a key word, you might devise two or three illustrations to assure its comprehension: (1) A boy is struggling to pull a very full green garbage bag across the floor; he points to the bag and says, "C'est un gros sac". (2) A girl has a large shopping bag full of groceries; she is exhausted and puts it down to rest; she points to it and says, "C'est un gros sac". For some words use two illustrations; for others use three. Do not use less than two. Keep each illustration short, so that the production does not drag.	4 or 5	2 min.
Alternative: Video-tape the desired scenes at a shopping centre and dub in the sound later; e.g. une foule, un manteau, des boîte de conserves, etc.		

Aspects of the Production	Number of Pupils Involved	Playback Time of Finished Production
3. Presentation:		
Choose students to present the dialogue or mini-play in any or all of the following ways:		
(a) Students act out the dialogue. Their voices are recorded. The dialogue can be written on large cardboard or on a moveable blackboard and set beside the camera. This would help students who have trouble memorizing.	4 or 5	2 min.
(b) Students mime the action, while the professional sound recording accompanying the course is fed into the videorecorder.	4 or 5	2 min.
(c) Students use puppets. In this case, you can record either student voices or the professional voices.	4 or 5	2 min.
4. Follow-up:		
Three types are possible:		
(a) Review the key words and structures presented during the pre-teaching stage. For example, a student holds up a large bag and says, "Qu'est-ce que c'est?" A pause is allowed for the answer, just as on the audio-tape. Then ten or so items should be reviewed at a fairly rapid pace to avoid monotony. If necessary, the teacher can replay this portion of the follow-up when the video-tape is being used later in class.	3 to 5	2 min.
(b) Choose from your course a structural exercise related to the dialogue being used. Have the students develop visuals to illustrate the meaning. Dub in the professional recording as the camera shoots the visuals.	3 to 5	2 min.
(c) Students ask content questions as the camera zooms in on the appropriate section of the wall chart or flash card. A pause is left for the answer; then the correct answer is given orally as it is flashed on the screen in writing. A second pause is left for repetition of this answer.		

Aspects of the Production	Number of Pupils Involved	Playback Time of Finished Production
5. Ending:		
Have a student write credits on the blackboard. As the theme music used at the beginning is replayed, all the students involved in the production come on camera one by one. The camera zooms in on the words "La Fin" or some object used earlier such as a "gros sac", then fades out.	1	15 sec.
	28 to 39	14 min. 45 sec.

Suggestions to Improve Production

1. Plan the whole production before attempting to shoot any scenes. Discuss the plan with the students.

2. Shooting Area: Try to find a quiet area, carpeted if possible. Bells, voices, banging doors, air conditioning, etc. are all picked up by the microphones. If there is no carpet, have the student actors remove their shoes. The clicking of shoes on hardwood is exaggerated on the recording.

3. Acting Area: Mark off with chalk the area in which the students are to act. It can be as wide as the wide angle of the camera will allow. It should be about four feet deep so that one camera can easily cover it with a zoom lens without focus adjustment. In most cases this will be an area six feet by four feet, next to a door. This area is small. The cameraman and students should realize that television acting is less spread out than live stage acting. All movement and gesture must be done in a confined area, slowly and deliberately. This lesson is hard to learn.

4. Sets: Pictures painted on brown craft paper can be fastened around the walls of the classroom to provide the desired background. Once the plan of the production has been decided, students can begin work on the sets for the acting area.

5. Modifying the Script: Do not hesitate to make slight changes in the script to meet your needs: staging, dialogue, directions for the cameraman are not inflexible.

6. Cue Board: In some cases you may want to write the lines on a chalkboard or on a sheet of newsprint. Students who forget can refer to them as they act. The cue board stands near the camera and faces the actors.

7. Lighting: Although classroom lighting is usually adequate, better results are achieved when additional light is directed onto

the acting area. Arrange to have any additional light coming from off camera and from the direction of the camera. Do not shoot scenes against a window if sunlight is coming in. A face, for example, that is shot against light from a window will turn out black. Shoot pictures against a light coloured wall, whenever possible.

8. Focusing: When you have marked off the acting area, move back until you can see the whole area in the viewfinder with a wide-angle shot. Have a student stand in the acting area. Zoom in for a close-up of his face. Focus the camera in this close-up position and it will be in focus for future close-ups or wide-angle shots, provided you do not move the position of the camera.

9. Visual Effects: To create the effect of a curtain rising, the cameraman may put his hand over the lens, set the camera in motion, then slowly raise his hand from in front of the lens. To simulate a curtain falling, he may lower his hand slowly over the lens, then turn the camera off. Other visual effects can be created by adjusting the light aperture or the focus. Try these visual effects and you will soon discover situations where they appropriate. Still other devices can be used. Branches, streamers, gauze and other materials can be introduced in fron of the lens to add a further dimension to a chosen environment.

10. Title and Credits: There are many imaginative ways of handling the graphics: felt markers, letraset, cut-out letters, tooth pick letters, lego bricks. Even the cafeteria menu board could be used.

11. Sound: Sound from records or tape can be fed into the video-recorder during or after the picture recording. If the picture is recorded first, then the sound is "dubbed in" later.

12. Picture composition: The cameraman should strive to take imaginative and meaningful pictures. Some should be wide-angle, others close-up. Decide what to include or emphasize in each picture. Choose the most interesting perspective or angle.

13. Framing: In each picture "frame" the subject so that it stands out. If you are shooting a close-up of a face, get the whole head in the picture. Do not let the hair, nose or some other feature be cut out inadvertently.

Television provides a perfect combination of the audio and visual stimuli that are essential for the effective learning and teaching of a second language. It is this combination, then that makes television ideal for developing listening comprehension, stimulating conversation and conveying the formal and deep culture of the target language.

Appendix A/Curriculum I-15A (Grade 7)

A) Aims of the French Program

General Aims

1. Attitude Development

a) In Canada, where a large proportion of the population is French-speaking, and where the inter-mingling of the French and English-speaking peoples will increase with time, it is important that each should have knowledge of the other's language for the purpose of communication and better understanding.

A major aim of the French program, therefore, should be to foster good-will toward, and understanding of, fellow Canadians who speak French.

b) The effort required to communicate in French will help the student to appreciate the difficulties of children learning English as a second language.

c) The teaching of the respective language skills when the child is psychologically and physiologically receptive should result in rewarding experiences in the language learning process and thereby promote favourable attitudes toward second language learning at higher levels.

2. Linguistic Objectives

It should be the aim of a French program to develop competence in hearing (auditory discrimination), understanding, speaking, reading and writing French within the limits of the course, for the purpose of direct communication with native speakers.

3. Cultural Objectives

It should be the aim of a French program to increase the pupil's awareness of the way other people live, and of the way they think and express themselves through the medium of their language.

Specific Aims

a) to develop the pupil's ability to understand spoken French at a normal rate of speed within the limits of the course of study.

b) to enable the pupil to express himself fluently with an acceptable accent and intonation within the limits of the structures and vocabulary contained in the course of study.

c) to establish, through hearing, understanding and speaking French, a solid basis of language patterns upon which the pupil may construct and expand both formally, through further study at the secondary level, and informally, through private study or contact with French-speaking people.

d) to effect the transition from oral skills to those of reading and writing, so that there be maximum transfer of the oral speech habits to the written forms and minimum interference of the written with the oral.